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GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE: THE ORIGINS OF TORONTO SOCIETY, 1793-1818[1]

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Dictionary of Canadian Biography

Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe, attempted to recreate in the new colony an example of the superiority of British government and society, hoping that he could thereby reveal to the citizens of the recently formed United States the errors of republicanism and independence. In his desire to establish as closely as possible the very "image and transcript" of the constitution of Great Britain, he followed the policy of the home government. In drafting the Constitutional Act, Home Secretary William Wyndham Grenville had felt that Canadian society should mirror that of Britain, having at its apex an hereditary aristocracy based upon landed wealth and service to the King.[2] This plan Simcoe failed to execute; his efforts were blocked by Grenville's successor, the Duke of Portland, who feared that the establishment of an hereditary aristocracy would lead Upper Canada down the familiar road to independence and separation.[3] Yet Simcoe did endow his new capital with a group of provincial officials who were able to establish themselves as a distinct social entity. A quarter of a century later these individuals, their offspring and protégés, were the Toronto[4] society and, in their roles as provincial officials, they were soon to become known as the Family Compact. This study deals with the earliest period of Upper Canada; it is an examination of the creation of the initial Toronto society and the gradual accumulation of power within the capital by a few favoured families. The terminal date has been set as 1818, which marks the accession to power of John Strachan and a consequent restructuring of the internal relationship among the town's elite.

Shortly after his arrival in Upper Canada Simcoe was privately accused of having brought enough followers to fill all the new government positions and there was more than a grain of truth in the claim.[5] Some of the new officials, especially those whose duties required a legal training, were imperial appointees.[6] But many of those chosen personally by the Lieutenant Governor had served under him in the Queen's Rangers during the Revolutionary War. These original officials of the new colony, whether imperial appointees or members of the Queen's Rangers, shared with Simcoe and the home government certain assumptions about the causes and the nature of the recent American Revolution. They believed that a stronger central government combined with an established church and an hereditary aristocracy would

forestall a repetition in British North America of the events which had brought about the loss of the thirteen colonies. They also saw themselves as constituting one third of this conservative social matrix — that is, the aristocracy. From their first arrival in Toronto they viewed themselves as the apex of the town's social scale. They were from the beginning God's chosen people and their mission was to perpetuate and spread their values and way of life as an alternative to those evolving in the United States. For much of the nineteenth century Toronto's development would be affected by their conservative political and social views. Yet in the decade following the official founding of Toronto the initial leading families and their associates numbered at the most thirty families and individuals.[7]

Since Toronto, for at least a decade, existed solely as a centre of government, it is not surprising that the provincial officials immediately came to control every aspect of the town's existence. Not only were there a number of provincial positions in Toronto, but also the town was the district seat of government and thus had local offices available.[8] As well as a centre of government the town quickly became the part-time residence of the colony's elected representatives, the seat of the Court of King's Bench, and the home of the Law Society of Upper Canada.[9] By 1798 no other centre west of Quebec could match Toronto in its opportunities for advancement.

Simcoe also made certain that his subordinates would grow and prosper with his capital by apportioning to them the choice waterfront and town lots and, in one hundred acre 'park lots', all the land immediately north and west of the original town site, above what was to become Queen Street.[10] This land above Toronto was not at first especially valuable, but it was, in most cases, held for speculation and gave the initial officials a stake in the town's future. It was also to be the basis of the future fortunes of the Macaulay, Elmsley and Jarvis families, among others.[11]

Beyond the governor's patronage legal training was a key to the door of government office and social mobility. This avenue quickly came to be carefully guarded by Toronto's elite. While it could not bar the entrance of British lawyers into Upper Canada, the Law Society completely controlled local entry into the profession which in turn opened the door to a number of government offices. The Law Society moved to Toronto shortly after its initial creation in Niagara in 1797 and was dominated by Toronto lawyers who were usually associated closely with the town's elite. A non-Toronto Treasurer (the chief officer) was not chosen by the Society's Benchers, or directors, until well after Confederation; the Benchers too, especially those who attended regularly, were usually members of Toronto society.[12]

While the possession of government office and land at or near Toronto marked one as a leading member of society and while legal training allowed one to advance, there were other prerequisites for aspirants to the town's highest social circle. An espousal of the proper social and political views was essential, as was an acceptable social background. A sound education was necessary to cope with administrative responsibilities. Finally, one required the ear of the Lieutenant Governor, the ultimate source of provincial patronage. The imperial appointees who were accepted into Toronto society usually possessed the proper combination of attitudes and attributes. Members of the initial leading families worked to instill in their children and protégés the values necessary for acceptance and advancement and they were regularly successful during the period under study.

It should be noted again that government office was virtually the sole occupational basis for advancement in the embryonic social structure of early Toronto.[13] Only one merchant, William Allan, was accepted into the upper echelon of the town's society and he rose, not through commercial opportunities, but because be combined a sound, even brilliant, business mind with properly conservative social and political beliefs and also because of his selfless devotion to the cause during the War of 1812.[14] As a garrison town, Toronto was the temporary home of many British officers who were generally accepted into the social life of the local elite. While as a group they added to the tone and impressiveness of Toronto's social acitivites, as individuals they were transients and had little effect upon the long term development of Toronto society. They were, however, looked upon as suitable marriage partners by Toronto society.[15]

Naturally, not all of those originally granted official positions and land in Toronto were members of the town's elite twenty-five years later. Some officials were promoted out of the colony and some died, while others, unable to cope with the primitive conditions, left for a more sophisticated life in Britain.[16] Still, few of those who remained lost the elite status which had been bestowed upon them at their arrival. Those who chose to stay came to form the core of a social entity which controlled Toronto's development for much of the nineteenth century. It is frequently stated that the Family Compact was destroyed in the 1840's but in fact some of its members only removed themselves from the public eye. In reality, they remained active at other levels of the province's and the city's life. Even in the 1860's members of the second generation of the initial leading families were still prominent in Toronto's social and economic affairs.[17].

During the first decade after Toronto's founding in 1793 some newcomers were accepted into its upper social stratum with little apparent hesitation.[18] Even Simcoe's original subordinates, though their land grants date from 1793, did not begin to settle permanently in Toronto until three years later. In addition, the last of the government officials did not arrive from the temporary capital of Niagara until 1798 and it was another year before the Assembly and the King's Bench met regularly in Toronto. Still, by 1803 most of the recently created provincial and local government offices were filled and advancement within Toronto society became a much slower and more jealously guarded process.[19]

Once the original officials had been placed mobility declined to a replacement pace. By 1803 most of those who would later compose the Toronto core of the Family Compact had settled in the town and were beginning to consolidate their positions. Whenever possible they brought their own children or protégés into their administrative departments, or, if lawyers, into the legal profession.

In the decade prior to the War of 1812 these original members of Toronto society continued to improve their own positions and to bring their offspring and assorted protégés within the magic social circle. They benefitted from the fact that through much of Toronto's first quarter century of growth the Crown was represented by an Administrator who was, at times, a member of the town's local hierarchy.[20] They also attempted to use their power and experience to influence Lieutenant Governors but against a strong personality the established families could not advance. In such cases as those of John Small and William Warren Baldwin, their individual influence was on occasion restricted by a refusal to grant them new and more prestigious positions in the local hierarchy. On the other hand, so entrenched was the position of Simcoe's chosen officials that the Lieutenant Governor could actually do little to lessen their social status.

Outsiders, in the form of imperial appointees, continued to be accepted into Toronto society as long as they integrated into the increasingly rigid social structure developing in the town. Those who refused or were unwilling to accept the role assigned to them quickly found York to have a very cold atmosphere. Of the thirty major appointments made between 1803 and 1812, nine went to imperial appointees and eighteen to members of families established in Toronto in the first decade after its foundings.[21] Of the five positions filled which required legal training, four went to British trained lawyers.[22] As Toronto's initial leading families produced their own competent lawyers they strengthened their monopoly of the local avenues of vertical mobility.[23]

The War of 1812 caused a tremendous change in the nature of social mobility within Toronto. Military careers, especially within the local militia, increased in importance and led, in the postwar period, to advancement in the civil administration. Nevertheless, upward mobility was intensive rather than extensive. Many rose within the hierarchy of Toronto society, but almost invariably the successful individuals were the sons or protégés of previously established families.

An analysis of important appointments made during this seven year period does not indicate a large increase in opportunities for advancement; forty such appointments were made as compared with thirty for the previous dacade.[24] However, a glance at the recipients of these positions indicates the nature of the change occuring in mobility patterns in Toronto during and shortly after the war. Only two of the forty positions went to imperial appointees while twenty-eight went to members, often second generation members, of the families originally established as Toronto's elite. No doubt the uncertainty caused by war led to a decline in the number of outsiders interested in acquiring a patronage post in Upper Canada; even the Lieutenant Governor himself spent the war in comfort in London on an extended leave of absence. Though Toronto's leading families were aided by the decline of imperial appointees, it was the continuation of their earlier efforts to influence recruitment into government service and their activities during the war itself which secured their postwar dominance.

The postwar period was one of consolidation of power for Toronto's elite, as members of the second generation, still largely unhindered by imperial competition, began to take up the civil functions for which they had been raised and trained and for which they had fought during the war. By 1818 the small group of the initial families controlled the major judicial and administrative posts in the colony, often competing with each other for preferment. Still, the stage was set for one individual with the proper values, ambition and leadership ability to grasp the scattered reins of power and turn Toronto society into a province-wide power. That individual was John Strachan. When he gained the ear of the Lieutenant Governor Toronto society quickly underwent internal personnel changes, as the future bishop forwarded his plans for the colony by advancing his favoured students and protégés.

The above provides a general evolutionary framework which can be tested by examining the rise of individual families possessing the basic criteria for membership in Toronto society. The six families chosen as case studies in this paper were headed by William Jarvis, Thomas Ridout, William Dummer Powell, D'Arcy Boulton Sr., William Chewett and William Warren Baldwin. They are representative of elite

recruitment experience and as such they seem to support the theory that a picked and chosen group was preferred for advancement.

William Jarvis was in Simcoe's Queen's Rangers, and all but Boulton and Baldwin were provincial officials during Simcoe's tenure as Lieutenant Governor. Two of them, Thomas Ridout and William Chewett, were high officers in the Surveyor General's office,[25] while William Jarvis was Provincial Secretary and Registrar and William Dummer Powell a Puisne, or Associate, Justice of the Court of king's Bench. Four were settled in the capital by mid-1798. William Warren Baldwin arrived in 1802 and D'Arcy Boulton and his family settled in the capital the following year. These last two became lawyers and judges, the first at the district, the second at the provincial level. All of those present before Simcoe's departure were granted prestigious front town lots in York and a share of the land north of the town. The Boultons and Baldwin acquired such land later. While several lived in ostentatious comfort on their country estates, each used his official income and the attached fees to enjoy a style of life in keeping wih his exalted position in Toronto society. Thus each of the family heads possessed the prerequisites for inclusion in Toronto's original elite.

In the following decade of relatively limited social mobility each attempted to use his official position and his influence with the Lieutenant Governor to further his own career and those of his children. In varying degrees, every one of these dynastic founders was able to assure positions of prestige and influence to his offspring and protégés.

The efforts made before the war by Surveyor General Thomas Ridout to secure his own advancement and that of his children form perhaps the best example of the nature of mobility within the elite of early Toronto. Ridout had one son, Samuel Smith Ridout, by a first marriage who was a decade older than his half-brothers. Samuel came to Toronto in 1800 and was duly installed as a junior clerk in his father's department. His own unbridled ambition and a later clash with the Lieutenant Governor, Francis Gore, whose undying enmity he had earned, led to his dismissal.[26] Thomas Ridout came to his son's rescue and brought him back into the Surveyor General's office when he himself was promoted to the headship of the department in 1810.

Thomas Ridout, however, was aware that in fact Samuel's career in York was at a standstill, as long as Gore remained Lieutenant Governor. Accepting the inevitable, he began to work for the advancement of his younger sons, who were coming of age in the last years before the war. He first prepared them for their future responsibilities in Toronto society by giving them the best education available in

Upper Canada. Along with the scions of York's other elite families they attended school at Cornwall under John Strachan. As part of his determined effort to advance his sons, Ridout advised one: "place yourself, if you can, under the Eye of Government and you will not be forgotten. . . ."[27] To this he added: "a situation in a public office will make you known, — and give you the independence of a gentleman. It will give you their society too —"[28] Despite his eldest son's faux pas, Thomas elicited from Gore the promise that he would do what he could for the younger sons as they became of age.[29] Soon his sons were employed as clerks in a number of government offices, one of which was, of course, Ridout's own Surveyor General's department.[30] If he failed in part to forward their careers, it was not for lack of trying; but he was in some degree and temporarily deterred by the limited possibilities for advancement. Still, he did bring three of his four oldest sons into the provincial administration in minor capacities.

The other families too can be cited to outline both the limited degree of mobility in early Toronto and the efforts made by the initial families to retain control of advancement and recruitment. Justice Powell was the only member of Toronto's elite present in western Quebec prior to Simcoe's arrival. He was accepted by the Lieutenant Governor because of his knowledge and experience, but he found his plans for personal advancement thwarted by the presence of imperial appointees. He did not become Chief Justice until 1816 after four incumbents had held the post. Yet Powell was equally determined to pass his position in local society on to his children. His second son, William Dummer Powell Jr., largely because of his father's influence, was one of sixteen individuals permitted to practice law in Upper Canada under the authority of a 1794 statute.[31] When another six men were granted similar privileges in 1803, Powell's eldest son, John, was one of them. Two daughters married members of the prominent Shaw and Jarvis families. As was the case with Thomas Ridout, Powell's lack of complete success in forwarding his family's interests was the result of circumstances rather than indifference. Justice Powell did all in his power to ensure the family's future position yet the Powell family was plagued by personal tragedy and few of their plans developed as they wished.[32]

In a similar fashion, but with much more success, D'Arcy Boulton unlocked the doors to advancement in York for his sons. He too was one of the "Heaven sent"[33] lawyers of 1803 and, two years later, became Solicitor General. Since the means of obtaining legal training and entrance into the profession after 1797 was to article under a lawyer, after being entered on the books of the Law Society, Boulton

made use of his gratuitous advancement into the profession to sponsor three of his four sons.[34].

William Warren Baldwin officially entered Toronto commerce in 1803 in the same manner as D'Arcy Boulton; he too was a "Heaven sent" lawyer and although he could hardly begin advancing his own family — his eldest son, Robert, was born in 1804 — he did bring a number of protégés into the profession.[35] Though he never was granted the major offices which Boulton attained, Baldwin did enjoy the prestige and emoluments of a number of local offices. It is possible that his entrance into Toronto society as a protégé of the declining ex-Administrator Peter Russell[36] hampered his quest for upward social mobility and certainly his lack of rapport with Lieutenant Governor Gore hurt his chances for advancement.[37] Indeed, it seems likely that Baldwin's early connections with his Irish countrymen and relatives, the Russell and Willcocks families,[38] and his inability to influence favourably Francis Gore, were the first factors leading to his later alienation from and opposition to the Family Compact. Though he was never able to find a place at the core of the town's patronage system, he was a gentleman and every part the social equal of any member of Toronto's elite. Once again the Lieutenant Governor by the refusal of patronage had arrested the advancement of a member of Toronto society but here too the influence of the Crown's representative was not sufficient to remove Baldwin from the established elite.

William Chewett and William Jarvis were also moderately successful in advancing their families in Toronto society in the decade before the war. Though Chewett as Deputy Surveyor General was not able to rise to the head of the office, the position occupied by Thomas Ridout after 1810, he did successfully defend his own position against Ridout's eldest son.[39] He was able to send his own son, James Grant Chewett, to school under Strachan at Cornwall and to bring him into the Surveyor General's office in a junior capacity shortly before the outbreak of war. In a similar fashion Provincial Secretary William Jarvis protected his own interests and advanced those of his children. Though he complained of being held back after Simcoe's departure,[40] he gained the favour of Lieutenant Governors Hunter and Gore[41] and remained a respected member of Toronto society until his death in 1817. Both of his sons were educated by Strachan and the eldest, Samuel Peters Jarvis, was articled to Attorney General Firth before the war.

Almost invariably the notable, at times even spectacular, examples of failure to attain the inner ranks of Toronto society in the period under discussion were outsiders, imperial appointees. The names

which come to mind are of course those of Charles Burton Wyatt, William Firth and Robert Thorpe.[42] In each case these individuals were dissatisfied with their allotted roles in Toronto society and were balked when they attempted to inject an element of change. For Thorpe at least, the sojourn in Upper Canada was but an episode in a troubled and none too successful career. For those imperial appointees, such as William Campbell and Thomas Scott, who accepted the conservative ethos of Toronto society and their own role in it, a happy and fulfilling life was possible. For those to whom such restrictions were intolerable, so too was life in York. Failure to be accepted or to advance in Toronto society prior to the war was usually the result of a lack of the proper connections or the favour of the Lieutenant Governor, or a refusal to accept the positions or the value systems of those previously entrenched in power.

Despite the ease with which Lieutenant Governors were able to impede or forward the careers of individual members of Toronto society, the latter too were developing an increasing ability to influence the provincial apex of power and patronage. Simcoe was clearly in control of his officials, but he was succeeded for a three year period by Peter Russell who was the first of a number of Administrators in the years 1793 to 1818. During his tenure he was faced with growing opposition and discontent among the government officials. These were also of course members of Toronto's elite.[43] When Hunter died suddenly in Quebec City in 1805 he was replaced by Commodore Alexander Grant, an old subordinate of Simcoe and again, a part time member of Toronto's upper class. Grant in turn was replaced by Francis Gore, an indifferent but head-strong Governor who, as has been noted, tended to intervene in Toronto affairs for personal reasons and who accelerated the already existing tendency to base promotions in government and local society upon personal connections and private interests.

Gore's absence from 1811 to 1815 created a virtual vacuum at the apex of Toronto society as one military Administrator followed another;[44] Toronto's prominent citizens were not slow to take advantage of the situation. When Gore at last retired in 1817 he was replaced for one year by Samuel Smith, who had also been one of Simcoe's original officials and who was a well entrenched member of Toronto society. Once again provincial and local affairs reverted to the control of the developing Toronto clique. Finally, Lieutenant Governor Maitland had not been at York many months before he accepted Strachan as his chief advisor. This is not to imply that the original leading families controlled provincial policies during this period. A strong

Lieutenant Governor such as Gore or the later John Colborne could easily sweep aside such pretensions. Nevertheless, for nine years out of the quarter century under study there was no Lieutenant Governor present to temper the influence of Toronto's elite. While they did not always agree with their fellow members of Toronto society on who should receive government appointments, they tended to choose from local talent.[45]

The trend of limited and gradual social mobility established in the decade after 1803 was rudely shattered by the American declaration of war in June 1812. The moderate influx of imperial appointees halted abruptly with the coming of hostilities and Toronto's original leading families quickly moved to fill provincial offices as they became vacant. The most startling example of internal advancement during this period was that of John Beverley Robinson who was a protégé of Justice Powell and the Reverend John Strachan.[46] Robinson, largely at Powell's urging, was made acting Attorney General in 1812 when the incumbent fell beside Brock at Queenston Heights; Robinson, who had fought at Detroit and Queenston Heights, was but twenty years old at the time of his promotion and had not yet been called to the bar.[47]

The Ridouts also used the opportunities provided by the war to advance themselves. Samuel Smith Ridout was paroled after Toronto's capture and went on to become Sheriff of the Home District and later Registrar of York County. Thomas Gibbs Ridout returned from Britain to enter the Commissary Department at a more than generous £500 *per annum*.[48] Once in a position of authority he sent for a younger brother to act as his private secretary and manoeuvered to bring in yet a second sibling.[49] Shortly after retiring on half pay as Deputy Assistant Commissary General, T.G. Ridout entered the new elite initiated Bank of Upper Canada as Cashier or General Manager. The elder Ridout was so pleased with his sons' successes that he would have been happy to see the war prolonged if it had meant continued advancement for his family.[50]

Both of the sons of Provincial Secretary Jarvis, Samuel Peters Jarvis and William Munson Jarvis, served in the war, the latter fighting at the battles of Queenston Heights and Stoney Creek. The former became Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, the office of the Assembly, in 1817, and later Deputy Provincial Secretary and Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs.[51] The latter left Toronto to become Sheriff of Gore District.[52] Once again conspicuous services enabled second generation members of the initial leading families to move into prestigious and influential government positions and to accept the roles in Toronto society for which their parents had trained and prepared them.

James Grant Chewett, the son of William Chewett, was also paroled after the capture of York and re-entered his father's office. He replaced his father as Deputy Surveyor General upon the latter's death in 1831 and retired when the capital was moved a decade later, becoming Vice-President of the Bank of Upper Canada. In 1856 he became the first President of the new Bank of Toronto.[53]

The war also pushed forward a new figure at York. John Strachan, previously a teacher of Toronto's leading families in Kingston and in Cornwall, won acceptance through his wartime activities just as did the merchant William Allan.[54] When York was captured in 1813 and militia Colonel William Allan arrested, Strachan bravely stood up to the American commander and made certain that the terms of the capitulation were honoured.[55] This wartime leadership coupled with his influence upon the rising second generation of York's initial families[56] and upon the Lieutenant Governor were to enable him to grasp virtual control of the development of Toronto and even Upper Canada for a full decade.

The postwar period was one of consolidation of power for Toronto's leading families. Strachan' rise to power, finalized shortly after Sir Peregrine Maitland's arrival in 1818, brought about internal status changes within Toronto society, for he rose at the expense of Justice Powell whose power and influence he gradually eclipsed. Strachan's past students, the Boultons, Robinson, the Jarvises and some of the Ridouts enjoyed the patronage of the Lieutenant Governor while other Ridouts and the Baldwins and Smalls languished beyond the pale.[57] The criteria for membership in Toronto society did not alter with Strachan's rise to power, but his protégés did tend to advance more quickly. In this way Strachan's appearance marks a turning point in the development of the town's elite.

The final indication that Toronto society had matured into a position of self-perpetuating power was the blatant and successful rearrangement of provincial offices which occurred at the end of Maitland's fourth month in office. Shortly before leaving Upper Canada Gore had suggested several shifts in offices to follow the promotion of Powell from Puisne to Chief Justice. Gore wanted Boulton Sr., then Attorney General, to succeed Powell as Puisne Justice and Solicitor General Robinson to become Attorney General. Boulton tried unsuccessfully to have his son, Henry John Boulton, appointed Solicitor General but the Colonial Office refused and there the matter rested until Maitland arrived.[58] Strachan then persuaded the new Lieutenant Governor to press again for the young Boulton's appointment and Maitland was successful. Members of Toronto's old families now

controlled the major judicial and legal posts of the colony. A decade later, at the height of the Compact's power, a similar 'job' would be perpetrated at the district and provincial levels involving four members of the Ridout and Jarvis families and three responsible government positions.[59] These are but two examples of a situation which was developing by 1818 in which son followed father in government office as though by hereditary right. Simcoe's actions of a quarter century before had borne fruit.

By 1818, the eve of Strachan's accession to power, Toronto society was an amorphous entity whose individual members largely controlled access into their own ranks by selected recruitment, usually from the younger members of their own families. Despite the occasional interjection of imperial appointees, they had succeeded, partly through the disruptive effects of the war, not only in maintaining their positions against outside threats but had also, in most cases, passed their offices and their social positions down to their children. By their very success they had proved to themselves their worthiness to occupy the highest stratum of Toronto society. Confident of the wisdom and utility of their political and social views — views which had been forged in the Revolutionary War and tempered in the second conflict with republicanism — they awaited only a leader to spread the word throughout Upper Canada. Truly by 1818 they were, in their own eyes at least, God's chosen people.

NOTES

[1] For an excellent analysis of Upper Canadian Tory ideology including the term "God's chosen people" see S.F. Wise, "God's Peculiar People" in W.L. Morton (ed.), *The Shield of Achilles* (Toronto, 1968), pp. 31-61.

[2] See Lord Chancellor Thurlow to W.W. Grenville, 1-10 Sept. 1789, E.A. Cruickshank (ed.), *The Correspondence of Lieut. Governor John Graves Simcoe,* V vols. (Toronto, 1923-31), hereafter *Simcoe Cor.,* I, 4-5; Grenville to Thurlow, 12 Sept. 1789, *Ibid.,* 6-7; Simcoe to Henry Dundas, 4 Nov. 1792, *Ibid.,* 251; Simcoe to Dundas, 23 Nov. 1792, *Ibid.,* 265; Simcoe to the Duke of Portland, 21 Dec. 1794, *Ibid.,* III, 235 and Simcoe to Portland, 17 Feb. 1795, *Ibid.,* III, 302.

[3] The Duke of Portland to Simcoe, 20 May 1795, *Ibid.,* IV, 12-14 and Simcoe to Portland, 30 Oct. 1795, *Ibid.,* IV, 115-8.

[4] In keeping with his penchant for British place names, Simcoe christened Toronto York in 1793; at the city's incorporation in 1834 it was renamed Toronto and will be referred to as such throughout this paper.

[5] Rev. John Stuart to Rt. Rev. Dr. White, Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, 17 July 1792, *Simcoe Cor.,* I, p. 180.

[6] The first four Chief Justices, William Osgoode (1791-94), John Elmsley (1796-1802), Henry Allcock (1802-05) and Thomas Scott (1806-16), were imperial appointees. The same was true of the first three Attorneys General, John White (1791-1800), Thomas Scott (1800-06) and William Firth (1807-12).

[7] For recent studies of local elites see M.S. Cross, "The Age of Gentility: The Formation of an Aristocracy in the Ottawa Valley" *Canadian Historical Association Report (CHAR),* 1967, pp. 105-17 and S.F. Wise, "Tory Factionalism: Kingston Elections and Upper Canadian Politics, 1820-1836" *Ontario History (OH),* LVII, 1965, pp. 205-223.

[8] In July 1801 York officially became the capital of the Home District. F.H. Armstrong, *Handbook of Upper Canadian Chronology and Territorial Legislation* (London, Ont., 1967), p. 163; hereafter Armstrong. It had probably been the unofficial district seat since 1798. See Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Hannah Jarvis to Rev. Samuel Peters, 10 July 1798, *Jarvis-Peters Papers.*

[9] The first Assembly met in York in 1797 and continuously as of 1800. Armstrong, p. 26. The Court of King's Bench arrived with Chief Justice John Elmsley in 1798 and the Law Society began meeting there in 1799. W.R. Riddell, *The Bar and Courts of the Province of Upper Canada* (Toronto, 1928), p. 55; hereafter Riddell, *Bar and Courts.*

[10] Almost all of the thirty-five park lots were granted to government officials and Queen's Rangers veterans. T.A. Reed, "Memoranda Re. the Crown Grants of Park Lots in the City of Toronto Based on the Records in the Registry Office", MS. compiled in 1926, Toronto Public Library, hereafter TPL.

[11] The Jarvis lot was subdivided and sold by William's eldest son in the 1840's. John Beverley Robinson purchased one half of an original lot in 1825 for £1000 and three years later sold six acres of it for the same amount. Similar profits were realized by others originally granted these lots.

[12] Twelve of the twenty-two Law Society Benchers chosen before the War of 1812 were residents of Toronto. Riddell, *Bar and Courts,* p. 73, n. 21. In assessing the role and influence of Toronto residents in provincial organizations situated in the capital one must consider the inadequacy of early Upper Canadian transportation systems. Given the difficulty of travelling, institutions located at York tended to be dominated by residents of the town.

[13] William Warren Baldwin arrived in York in 1802 with a medical degree from Edinburgh and began to practice; yet in order to support his family he found it necessary to turn first to teaching and then to a legal career. In themselves these professions were not capable of quickly advancing one — even a gentleman — in Toronto society. In 1806 Baldwin received official acceptance when he received his first government post as Clerk of the Crown and Pleas, an office of the King's Bench.

[14] See M.L. Magill, "William Allan and the War of 1812" *OH,* LXIV, 1972, pp. 132-41.

[15] A daughter of the prominent ex-Queen's Ranger and Executive Councillor, AEneas Shaw, was engaged to Sir Isaac Brock while one of Surveyor General Thomas Ridout's offspring married a garrison officer.

[16] Upper Canada's first Surveyor General, David William Smith, retired to Britain in 1804 while the first Attorney General, John White, died in a duel in 1800. The first three Chief Justices of Upper Canada, William Osgoode, John Elmsley and Henry Allcock, were each promoted to the Chief Justiceship of Lower Canada.

[17] James Grant Chewett and William Botsford Jarvis, for example, remained influential in Toronto affairs until their deaths in the 1860's.

[18] Thomas Scott arrived in 1801 as Attorney General and remained to become Chief Justice and a highly respected member of Toronto society; he died in the town in 1824.

[19] Between 1791 and 1803 approximately 100 major appointments were made, ranging from Chief Justice through Executive and Legislative Councillors to first clerk-

ships of the various administrative offices. In the following decade roughly thirty replacement appointments were made. In the seven year period from 1812 to 1818 this number rose slightly to forty. The datum come from Armstrong, *passim.*

[20] Samuel Smith, for example, was an ex-Queen's Ranger, an original land holder, an Executive Councillor and twice Administrator of the province.

[21] Armstrong, *passim.*

[22] The positions were those of Chief Justice, Puisne Justice and Attorney General. Armstrong, pp. 109 and 17.

[23] Between 1791 and 1803 twenty-seven individuals were called to the bar of the Law Society of Upper Canada but twenty-one did so by two special acts of Parliament. 34 Geo. III cap. 4 and 43 Geo. III cap. 3. Proper legal training was not available until the first decade of the nineteenth century.

[24] Armstrong, *passim.*

[25] Surveyor General and Deputy Surveyor General respectively.

[26] Samuel Ridout had become enmeshed in the well known feud between Gore and Surveyor General Charles Burton Wyatt. Ridout had failed to inform the Lieutenant Governor that Wyatt was transmitting confidential material to the Home Government. William Halton, Civil Secretary to Gore, to S.S. Ridout, 28 May 1807, Public Archives of Ontario (PAO), *Ridout Papers.* Though Wyatt later successfully sued Gore, the damage had been done to Ridout's career.

[27] *Ridout Papers,* Thomas Ridout to Thomas Gibbs Ridout, 16 July 1811.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ridout Papers,* Thomas Ridout to George Ridout, 18 Feb. 1807.

[30] His second son, George, articled under Solicitor General Boulton and worked as a clerk for the Assembly and in the Surveyor General's office as did his third son, Thomas Gibbs Ridout, who was also Deputy Registrar of Deeds for York County. A fourth son, John, was but thirteen when war broke out and he remained in Strachan's capable hands.

[31] 34 Geo. III, cap. 4. Many of the petitions and requests sent to the Lieutenant Governor were forwarded to Attorney General John White for his opinion and since legal training was not a prerequisite, one can only conclude that White was basing these opinions on more personal factors. Some of the requests and White's views are contained in the Wolford Manor (Simcoe) Papers and are used by Riddell in his *Bar and Courts,* pp. 43-4, n. 7. In conclusion Riddell states: "It is not unlikely that most of these appointments were due to White's knowledge of and friendship with the recipients of the Licences. In his Diary, I find him on friendly terms with the following of them: Smith, Macdonnell, Clark, McLean, Gray, Powell, Stewart, Robinson and McKay." *Bar and Courts,* p. 45, n. 12.

[32] Two of Powell's eight children perished in shipwrecks; a third died suddenly leaving two infant children to be raised by the elder Powells.

[33] The term was used in Toronto to underline the easy manner by which the six new lawyers were granted the right to practice. Riddell, *Bar and Courts,* p. 57.

[34] These were D'Arcy Jr., Henry John and George Strange Boulton. He also proposed for acceptance such rising stars as John Beverley Robinson, James Buchanan Macaulay, Allan Napier MacNab and George Ridout. *Minutes of Convocation,* Law Society of Upper Canada, Osgoode Hall.

[35] They were his nephews, Henry Ricketts Baldwin and Robert Baldwin Sullivan, and Simon Washburn and James Edward Small, son of the Clerk of the Executive Council. *Ibid.*

[36] Russell had gained the enmity of his peers when, as Administrator, he transmitted Simcoe's orders that the capital be moved from the relatively comfortable Niagara to the wilderness of Toronto Bay.

[37] In 1812 Baldwin was manoeuvering for the position of Solicitor General and his bitterness at being bypassed for the position of Attorney General in favour of the younger John Macdonell precipitated a duel between the two. PAO, *Baldwin Papers,* Baldwin to William Firth, 22 Apr. 1812. Earlier he admitted to a close friend that his relationship with Gore was at best cool and strained. TPL, *Baldwin Papers*, Baldwin to Quetton St. George, 28 Dec. 1809.

[38] He married a Willcocks, a family of minor officials, and protégés and relatives of Russell. When Receiver General Russell's influence began to decline, so too did the Willcocks name disappear from Toronto society.

[39] *Ridout Papers,* Thomas Ridout to Thomas Gibbs Ridout, 11 Sept. 1811 and Memorial of S.S. Ridout to Sir Gordon Drummond, 9 Dec. 1814.

[40] *Jarvis-Peters Papers,* Hannah Jarvis to Rev. Samuel Peters, 26 July 1796 and 20 July 1797.

[41] *Ibid.,* William Jarvis to Rev. Samuel Peters, 11 Mar. 1800.

[42] See G.M. Craig, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841* (Toronto, 1963), pp. 60-4.

[43] Hunter relied especially upon John Elmsley until his promotion to Lower Canada. See Elmsley to Hunter, 24 Nov. 1800, 23 Dec. 1800 and 24 Dec. 1800. TPL, Elmsley Letterbook.

[44] There were six military Administrators in all.

[45] In filling the vacancy occasioned by the death of Provincial Secretary William Jarvis in 1817, Administrator Samuel Smith recommended ex-Sheriff Alexander Macdonrell, his own brother-in-law. Jarvis' eldest son, Samuel Peters Jarvis, was passed over for the permanent position because, only one month earlier, he had killed John Ridout in a duel. His younger brother, William Munson Jarvis, was appointed Acting Secretary, PAD, *Strachan Papers,* Powell, 18 Aug. 1817, quoted in *Strachan Letter Book,* p. 134.

[46] Both men claimed this honour. W.D. Powell to J.B. Robinson, undated (about 1824), TPL, *W.D. Powell Papers*, Strachan to Jonathan Sewell, Chief Justice of Lower Canada, p. 26 Aug. 1815, Geo. W. Spragge, (ed.), *The John Strachan Letter Book: 1812-1834* (Toronto, 1946), p. 88, hereafter *Strachan Letter Book* and Strachan to Hon. John Richardson, 10 May 1813, *Ibid,* p. 37.

[47] Robinson was also appointed Solicitor General in 1815 while Sir Frederick P. Robinson, a relative, was Administrator; Robinson was brilliant but he had the help of powerful patrons as well.

[48] *Ridout Papers,* Thomas Gibbs Ridout to Thomas Ridout, 6 Jan. 1814.

[49] *Ibid.,* T.G. Ridout to George Ridout, 19 Jan. 1814.

[50] *Ibid.,* T. Ridout to T.G. Ridout, 21 Jan. 1814.

[51] Armstrong, p. 104, p. 22 and p. 20.

[52] *Ibid.,* p. 162.

[53] *Brown's Toronto General Director, 1856* (Toronto, 1856), p. 227.

[54] Magill, "William Allan" and the War of 1812 *OH,* LXIV, 1972, pp. 132-41. See Charles W. Humphries, "The Capture of York", *OH,* LI, 1959, pp. 1-21 for a discussion of Strachan's role and its effect upon his future position of leadership in Toronto society.

[55] PAO, *Strachan Papers,* Strachan to Dr. James Brown, 26 Apr. 1813, quoted in Firth, *Town of York,* I, pp. 294-6.

[56] Strachan by this date had taught members of the Robinson, Ridout, Chewett, Jarvis and Macaulay families.

[57] Strachan also brought some non-Toronto individuals in such as George Herkimer Markland of Kingston.

[58] *Strachan Letterbook,* Strachan to Gore, 16 June 1817, p. 136 and p. 250, n. 316.

[59] TPL, *Powell Papers,* Samuel Peter Jarvis to his father-in-law W.D. Powell, 19 Dec. 1827.